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# Senior Executive Intelligence Brief

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**Friday, 17 September 1999**

**National Security Information**

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## Table of Contents

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### Leading Developments

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Indonesia: Army on Both Sides of Fence in East Timor	1
Indonesia: Activists Will Keep Political Pot Boiling	2
Analytic Perspective	

	4
	5
	7
	8
	9
	10
	12
	14

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17 September 1999

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### Looming Border Problems

The Indonesian military will retain links to prointegration militias despite reports that growing numbers of militia elements are retreating to West Timor, where they can regroup, rearm, and recruit. [redacted] the Indonesian military representative to the militias has held open-ended talks with militia leaders about future military action, leaving them to believe support from the armed forces will continue indefinitely.

- Militia cross-border activity—launched from staging bases in rural frontier areas of West Timor—is a strong possibility.
  - The Indonesian armed forces will maintain a substantial presence in West Timor—close enough to continue covert support to prointegration forces if they so choose. [redacted]
- 
- [redacted]

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17 September 1999

## Leading Developments

### Indonesia:

#### Army on Both Sides of Fence in East Timor

[redacted] the military is dismantling its command structure in East Timor and is preparing to return the five battalions serving rotational duties in the province to their parent commands. Remnants of the two local East Timorese battalions already have withdrawn.

— [redacted] the moves leave only core headquarters elements, Strategic Reserve units, police mobile brigade forces, and engineering and support units. The military intends to base its command structure around Strategic Reserve forces to be stationed in Dili and Baucau, *but the size and mission of this contingent is unclear.*

— *All remaining forces could be withdrawn rapidly when the battalions have left.* [redacted]

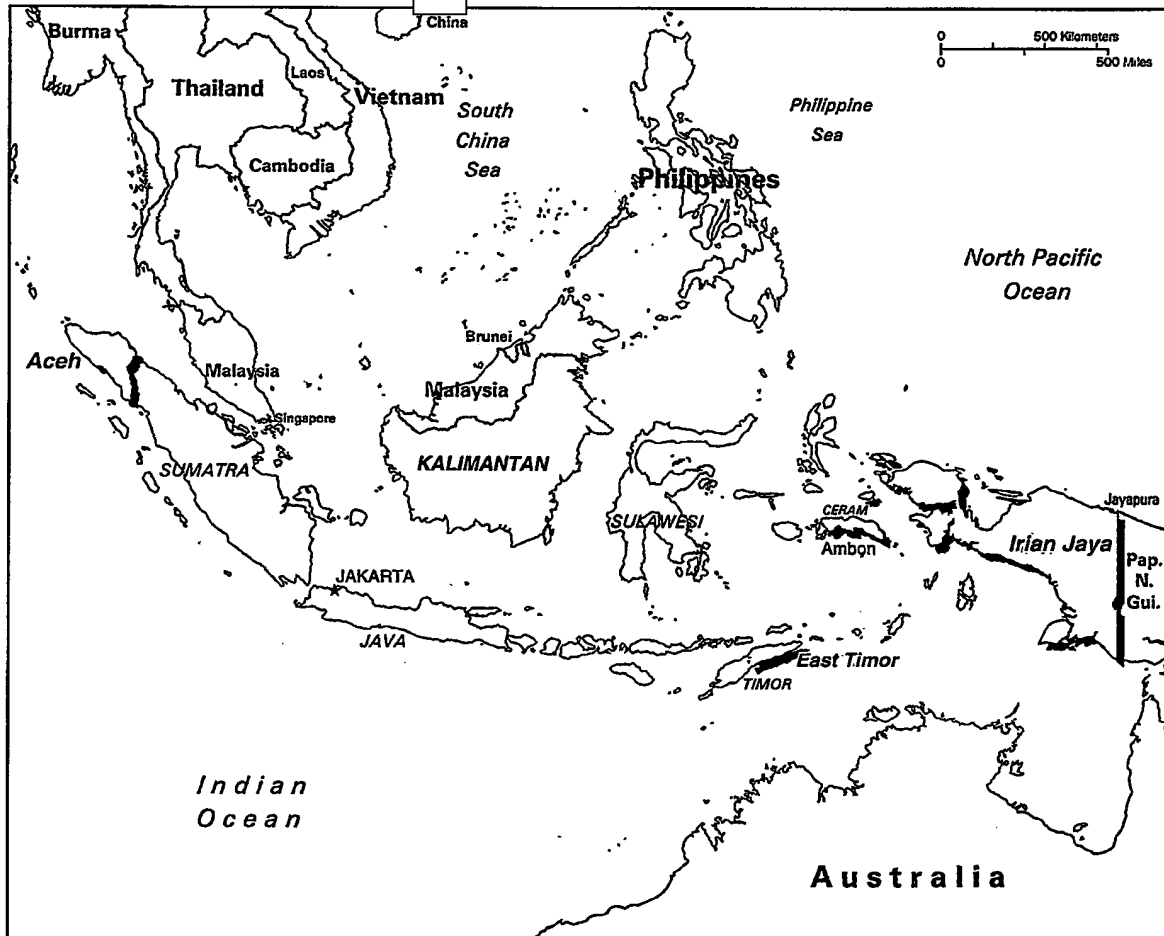
[redacted] Indonesian troops are trying to establish order and to improve conditions in the province before the arrival of the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET)—*a task made easier by a growing exodus of prointegration militias to West Timor.* Martial Law Commander Syahnakrie has ordered troops to repair buildings and to distribute rice and has shown cooperation with Red Cross officials,

— [redacted]

— The status of Army Special Forces units, which were responsible for organizing, equipping, and training the prointegration militias, is unknown; *their continued presence and covert activity could pose a major threat to INTERFET forces.* [redacted]

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Indonesia: Areas of Recent Unrest



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**Indonesia:**  
*Analytic Perspective*

**Activists Will Keep Political Pot Boiling**

Several events in the next month or so will test Jakarta's ability to cope with disaffected groups and hotspots other than East Timor. The government's response will affect the high-stakes political maneuvering in advance of the selection later this year of a new president by the People's Consultative Assembly.

- Selection of Assembly delegates is far behind schedule, and the major parties are embroiled in internal conflicts over strategy and presidential preferences.

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*The 34th anniversary of the 30 September abortive coup that ushered in the Soeharto era and holidays honoring the military, including Armed Forces Day on 5 October and the struggle for independence against the Dutch on 28 October, could fan nationalistic sentiment and stir debate about military-civilian relations.*

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**Regional Actors Restive**

Disenchanted groups around the archipelago may try to exploit Jakarta's distraction with East Timor and the Assembly. Religious leaders in Aceh this week publicly called on the government to hold a referendum similar to the one in East Timor to allow residents to choose whether to remain in Indonesia or to become independent.

- Habibie's preoccupation with the presidential selection process suggests Jakarta will do little to dampen the already high tension.

Press reports say police last week killed one person in Irian Jaya after some residents, encouraged by the Timor vote, raised a separatist flag.

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**Others Waiting in the Wings**

Student and other groups are reemerging on the political stage demanding political reform and accountability. Several student protests this week occurred in Jakarta, according to press reports, and [redacted] demonstrations in Jakarta and elsewhere will grow in size and frequency in the runup to the Assembly. [redacted]

In contrast, Muslim constituencies are likely to use the Assembly, not the street, to flex their political muscle. They will not form a united front because of internal divisions, but each of the presidential candidates needs support from at least one of the large Muslim blocs, giving Muslim activists an incentive to raise the temperature of their political rhetoric and to press their parochial concerns. [redacted]